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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 000532

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [ECIN](#) [ETRD](#) [IZ](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH AND IRAQI OFFICIALS ACHIEVE LITTLE AT
BORDER TALKS

REF: A. 2003 ANKARA 7444

[1](#)B. 2004 ANKARA 112

Classified by DCM Robert Deutsch for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: In a follow-up to agreements reached in Ankara in December 2003 (ref a), Iraqi and Turkish officials met in the Turkish border town of Cizre (January 20-22) to discuss improving border operations. However, the results were disappointing: the Turkish side insisted that it could only discuss the construction of a second border crossing, so the pressing issue of improving the operation of the Habur Gate crossing was not addressed. The delegations visited the Habur facilities and the Turkish proposed sites (in Turkey and Iraq) for the second crossing. The Turks forcefully tried to persuade the Iraqis to agree to a very detailed proposal, but the Iraqi side agreed only to respond to the Turkish proposal in time for a meeting in Ankara in March. Consul Adana and Embassy Econoff attended the talks. (Text of the agreement is included in para 8.) End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) The Turkish government invited Iraqi authorities to talks in Cizre, January 20-22, as a follow-up to agreement to improve border operations, reached during talks in Ankara in December. That agreement included two principle objectives: 1) improving the processing of trucks at the Habur Gate facility from about 1,300 per day each way to 1,850; and 2) construction of a second border crossing to the west of Habur. In the week before the meetings, we repeatedly asked MFA for an agenda for the talks, but we were told that an agenda would be agreed by the two sides on the first day of talks in Cizre. In fact, the Turkish side specifically instructed its delegation that it was only to discuss the second border crossing.

[1](#)3. (C) The Turks opened the talks by insisting that the Iraqis approve a detailed Turkish proposal for the construction of the second crossing, including specific instructions on the location of the crossing and 50 km of new road needed in Iraq to connect to the main road to Mosul. (This route runs west of Kurdish areas and near a Turkmen-populated area.) The Turks' proposal also included an offer to handle the financing of the project, which the Turks estimate would cost \$80 million. When the Turks were pressed for details, they revealed that the financing would come from concessional crude oil sales by Iraq to Turkey.

[1](#)4. (C) CPA rep in Dohuk reported that the Turkish approach had the effect of uniting the two elements on the Iraqi side of the table -- the local Kurdish officials and representatives of the IGC from Baghdad. The Iraqis kept cool, offering a counter proposal and finally agreeing on a much-watered-down text. The final document (see para 8) includes most of the specific demands tabled by the Turks. However, the Iraqi-negotiated additions to the text agree only to respond to the Turkish proposals, with a target to have a draft agreement ready for a bilateral meeting scheduled for March in Ankara. Furthermore, the agreement says that financing will require further negotiations.

[1](#)5. (U) As a final point, the Iraqi side inserted its view that development of the second border gate should not detract from the commitment to increase traffic at Habur to 1,850 per day. The text included the Turks' response that they were not authorized to discuss Habur issues.

[1](#)6. (U) In the background to the negotiations, operations at the Habur Gate facility declined dramatically. Processing by the Turks of southbound traffic declined from 1,500 trucks on January 19th, to just 880 on January 21. The consequences of the day's slowdown was evident when the delegations returned from Iraq to Cizre: the line of trucks waiting to enter Iraq grew by several kilometers, stretching double-file well beyond the town of Silopi.

17. (C) The issues of Habur Gate were discussed frequently on the margins of the talks. Despite assurances in Ankara that the modernization of Habur Gate would begin soon (ref b), local officials, including the Turkish sub-governor in charge of the border operations, knew nothing about the specifics of the plan or when it would begin. Turkish officials confirmed that additional Customs personnel had been assigned to Habur Gate but had no ideas for how to increase processing to the agreed level of 1,850, or how to keep the processing going during the construction phase.

18. (U) Begin text of Agreed Minutes of Cizre Meeting:
Minutes of the Meeting of Regarding the Second Border Gate to be Opened Between Turkey and Iraq

The Turkish and Iraqi Delegations, the lists of which are annexed to this present document, met on 20-22 January, 2004 in Cizre/Turkey in order to determine the technical details of the second border gate to be opened between Turkey and Iraq and of connecting road network and the principles of the agreement to be concluded between the two countries in accordance with the provisions of Agreed Minutes signed on November 21, 2003 and of Minutes of Meeting signed on December 2, 2003 and after a site survey and partial route study in the territories of respective countries, have agreed on the following:

1. The second border gate will be located in Ovakoy, in the regions ca. 200-300 meters east of Kirkuk-Yumurtalik Pipeline, as stipulated in Agreed Minutes signed on November 21, 2003 and of Minutes of Meeting on December 2, 2003.

2. At the outset of the negotiations, the Turkish side made the necessary explanations, after submitting the Project Route Proposal, which was marked on the map of 1/50,000, to the Iraqi side, for the second border gate and its connecting road network within Turkish and Iraqi territories which foresees:

a, stretching southwards through a 14 kilometres long, total 4 lane divided road which will pass parallel to the pipeline and which will start on the departing point from the highway of Cizre-Silopi, ca. 5 kilometres west of Silopi and ca. 250 meters east of PS-3 Silopi Pump Station on the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline.

b. crossing Habur Stream through ca. 300 meters long two separate bridges 4 lane in the Turkish-Iraqi border region, in the vicinity of Ovakoy on the Turkish side and in the vicinity of Karavala Village on the Iraqi side.

c. reaching Tigris River on the point ca. 3 kilometers northwest of Bajd Brad Village through a divided ca. 10 kilometers long total 4 lane road which will start in the vicinity of Karavala Village on the Iraqi side and stretch parallel to the pipeline on its eastern side and crossing Tigris River at the point through two separate bridges 4 lane.

d. connecting Musul-Telgocek highway on the point ca. 2 kilometers west of Teluwainat Village through a ca. 40 kilometers long, 4 lane divided road southwards starting from these bridges.

3. The Iraqi side requested a period of three weeks in order that the Iraqi relevant authorities could examine the Turkish Project Route Proposal and this request has been accepted by the Turkish side. After the examinations and evaluations to be completed within at most three weeks, the Iraqi side will convey, through diplomatic channels, to the Turkish side its views regarding the Turkish project proposal and any alternative proposal should there be any.

4. The two sides conducted pre-examination and made observations on the Turkish side on January 20, 2004 and on the Iraqi side at the vicinity of Karavala Village alongside the border line and in the region stretching to Derabun Village on January 21, 2004 in the context of the Turkish project proposal.

5. Following the receipt of the detailed views of the Iraqi side regarding the project, the issue will be evaluated as soon as possible by the Turkish side, and provided that there is a mutual understanding, the both sides will form a

technical team through diplomatic channels at their earliest convenience which will specify the technical standards of the project and examine the parts of the project within Iraqi territory.

Iraqi and Turkish Authorities will take necessary measures including those related to security of technical teams to facilitate the joint survey in both countries' territories.

16. Following the mutual understanding on project details resulting from the joint studies to be conducted by technical teams in the Iraqi territory, the text of the agreement will be drafted by the delegations of the two countries during negotiations to be held in Ankara in the second half of March 2004.

17. The modalities of financing of the project will be clarified through the negotiations between the delegations from the Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade of the Republic of Turkey and the appropriate authorities of the Republic of Iraq to be held within the context of aforementioned meeting in Ankara.

18. The Iraqi side stated that any proposed development of this second border gate should not detract from agreed joint efforts from the Turkish and Iraqi sides to increase the flow of trucks across the current Habour Border Gate bridges to an average of 1850 trucks per day in each direction as mentioned in article 9 of the Agreed Minutes of December 2, 2003 meeting in Ankara.

The Turkish side stated that it is not authorized concerning the works to be done in Habour Gate.

Done in Cizre on January 22, 2004 in two originals in English, both being equally authentic.

End Text.

Baghdad minimize considered.
DEUTSCH